Under non-plan scheme *viz.* "Assistance to Panchayati Raj Institutions/ Voluntary Organisations / Self Help Groups, for Construction of Old Age Homes/ Multi Service Centres for Older Persons" three project proposals are pending. The period of pendency with reasons for the same is as follows:—

| Sl. No. | Name of the Organisation | Date of receipt of application in the Ministry from which pending | Reasons for pendency |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Mahatma Nature Cure Centre, Taliparamba, Kannur Distt. | 16.7.2001 (New application) | Non-availability of funds during 2001-02. |
| 2. | Sneha Bhavan, Arayangad, Kannur Distt. | 31.8.2001 (Application for second instalment) | First instalment of Rs. 2.50 lakhs has already been released. The second instalment could not be released due to non-availability of funds during 2001-02. |
| 3. | Santhisadan, Malappuram Distt. | 17.4.2002 (New application) | Due to non-availability of funds for new project. |

**Child marriages in Chhattisgarh**

*672. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:
SHRI V. V. RAGHAVAN:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned, "3000 child marriages in Chhattisgarh", which appeared in the Hindu (Delhi edition), dated the 24th April, 2002;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken, if any against the Collector who failed to prevent it though he was informed about the child marriages in advance by Sarpanch; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to prevent the child marriages in future in the State?

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (DR. SATYA NARAYAN JATIYA): (a) and (b) According to the report received

from the Government of Chhattisgarh, the State Government has taken cognizance of the News Reports captioned "3,000 Child Marriages in Chhattisgarh" published in 'The Hindu' dated 24.04.2002. The Collector of Kawardha District has sent a list of 182 suspected child marriage cases to the Superintendent of Police for investigation. Further, the district administration has also taken a number of steps to prevent incidence of child marriages and generate social awareness amongst the people on this issue. These include distribution of pamphlets and posters, meeting community leaders, involvement of local Sarpanch and Gram Panchayat Bodies and Gram Sabhas to generate public opinion against child marriage. The district administration field functionaries have also been instructed to be vigilant. According to the State Government the question of taking action against the Collector for the alleged failure to prevent child marriages does not arise in this context.

(c) The Government of Chhattisgarh has planned to launch a full scale social awareness campaign against the evil of child marriages in the State. Adequate social and legal measures will also be taken to curb this evil practice, which includes taking pro-active help of people's representatives.

**VLPT / HPT TV towers in Himachal Pradesh**

†*673. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the number and the locations of the VLPT / HPT TV towers to be installed by Government in Himachal Pradesh in the financial year 2002-2003;

(b) the amount to be spent on each TV tower by Government; and

(c) whether Government would consider to convert the VLPT of Shimla into HPT so that the programmes of Doordarshan can be viewed without any disturbance?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) and (b) Three Very Low Power Transmitters (VLPTs), one each at Jatingri, Kaja and Chirgaon in Himachal Pradesh are expected to be installed during 2002-2003. Approved capital cost of these VLPT projects is as under:

(i) VLPT, Jatingri—Rs. 83 lakh

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.